

The New Adventures of J. Rufus Wallingford.

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PROLOGUE.

You have never come across anything more rollicking, more joyful and full of the spice of modern life than our serial story entitled "The New Adventures of J. Rufus Wallingford." That precious pair of deft and not over-scrupulous adventurers, Wallingford and Blackie Daw, are still engaged in their favorite occupation of separating people from their money. This story is not only brim full of snap and go, but added interest is given to it because of the fact that you can not only read the story in this newspaper, but you can also see moving pictures illustrating it posed by famous actors.

CHAPTER I.

The Restitution Fund.

GRAND and shrieks unspeakable issued from the closed doors of the Pullman drawing room, and the two girls, who were the only occupants of the car, looked at each other in concern.

"Some one is ill!" said the younger and more vivacious. She was very handsome and about twenty.

The other girl, who was about twenty-two and more sedate, though there was the twinkle of humor in her brown eyes, touched the bell at her side, and the two, apparently sisters, from their likeness of feature and from the neat half-mourning, waited for the porter.

"I can't stand it any longer, Fannie!" and the younger of the two girls jumped up.

Her sister hesitated, then followed to the door of the drawing room, outside of which they stood for a moment, while those terror inspiring sounds rose above the loud rattle of the train.

It was Fannie who at last knocked. No one came; only the groans and shrieks responded. The girls looked at each other in frightened pallor.

"Just turn the knob, Violet, and we'll peep in," finally advised Fannie.

An extra loud shriek seemed to animate Violet's hand, for it turned the knob, and the girls peeped timidly through the crack. They stopped, numbed by the unexpected sight which met their eyes, and a lurch of the train jerked the door from Violet's hand and swung it wide.

"Welcome, ladies," greeted the lean, lank mustache, with a flourish of his saxophone and another flourish with his unoccupied hand. "Won't you come in and listen to the concert?"

The two girls emerged from their stupor and began to turn pink with embarrassment.

"So sorry," apologized Fannie, but suddenly Violet glared.

"Frankly," she explained, "we thought some one was dying in here."



Violet and Fannie.

and the broad chested man with the huge diamond in his cravat, who was the other occupant of the drawing room, chuckled, his wide shoulders heaving and his eyes half-closed.

"What is your favorite musical selection?"

"Tell him 'The Wearin' of the Green,' Miss Violet," broke in a rich voice, and a red faced conductor stood there, his eyes twinkling.

Both the girls laughed, and the gifted amateur turned to the conductor with a well assumed expression of grievance.

"This is rough on real art," he complained. "If you won't come in, ladies, may I entertain you outside?"

They had just turned laughingly to go back to their seats, when a glister-

ing haired little Jap with a preternaturally solemn face came stalking back through the car, and handed the conductor a note. The conductor read it, said gruffly, "No answer," and the Jap went away.

The faces of the girls changed instantly, as they saw the stationery, with its shadow-like imprint of a flying bird across the face of the envelope.

"The Swallow," and Fannie's low voice filled with sadness.

"Oh, Mr. O'Connell!" exclaimed Violet, and two quick tears sprang into her eyes. "Is this?"

"Yes, Miss Violet!" and Conductor O'Connell frowned as he punched the tickets. "It used to belong to these young ladies. Their father built it for them—Warden, owner of this road.

When he died old E. H. Falls somehow or other got the road, and Miss Violet and Miss Fannie that I've hauled since they were babies haven't a cent. Old Falls skinned 'em, that's what he did. Out of \$5,000,000! And he went on:

"Say, Jim," said the black mustached musician, "did you hear that outrage?"

"Yes," replied the big man, frowning as he lit a thick black cigar.

Blackie gazed out of the door to where the beautiful golden head of Violet Warden rested upon the shoulder of her dark haired sister. Suddenly he slammed his saxophone in its case and hurried straight out to the girls and leaned over the seat in front of them.

"Beg your pardon," he began, his black eyes snapping. "I'm Horace G. Daw, and you might as well call me Blackie; everybody else does. My partner is J. Rufus Wallingford, and he's the slickest little financial manipulator in the United States, bar none. Why, Jim Wallingford can go into a town where the entire floating capital consists of three copper pennies and a plugged dime and come away with enough money to start a branch mint. Now, we've just heard that old E. H. Falls skinned you out of five million, and we're going to get it back for you. Give me the details."

Three minutes later J. Rufus Wallingford, coming to the door of the drawing room, saw Blackie and the two girls bent together in friendly and eager conversation.

"Come here, Jim," called Blackie. "Say, there was a whole gang in this deal, a clique headed by Falls! We're going to get that money!"

"Fins," chuckled Wallingford. "Getting money either backward or forward is my main reason for living."

Just then the train stopped with an abrupt jerk, which threw big J. Rufus Wallingford off his feet and tossed Violet Warden forward into the arms of Blackie Daw.

Five young men picked themselves from the floor of the magnificent private car Swallow after that rude stop of the train and viewed the devastation with extreme annoyance. The whist cars lay scattered everywhere; a beautiful pastebord model of a portable bungalow had been jerked from the sideboard and bent in the tumble.

"How very aggravating!" said young Bessy Falls as he rang for Shamasanka, but his dimples returned immediately.

"Some one shall have a good ragging for this. Sammy, you've been a vexing long time in coming."

"I beg your pardon, sir," replied the Jap in his college English, "but I thought you might like to know the cause of the delay, and I hurried out to investigate."

"Very well, you may tell us," Mr. Falls graciously consented.

"Thank you, sir," responded Shamasanka. "There is a heavy rock slide on the track just ahead of us. The engineer made a very good stop, but unfortunately snapped a driving rod in doing so."

"You will tell the conductor," said Mr. Falls in the voice of authority, "to repair the driving rod, clear the track and proceed immediately. Wait; he shall have written instructions."

Mr. J. Rufus Wallingford was outside discussing ways and means with the conductor when Shamasanka came with the message.

"Would you listen to this?" flared O'Connell. "Mr. Falls directs me to repair the driving rod, clear the track and proceed immediately!" He turned to Shamasanka red in the face. "You tell Mr. Falls that I directed him to go to the devil!" he roared.

Wallingford turned to the conductor in perplexity. "You must be tired of your job," he suggested.

"Me? I love it," responded O'Connell. "But you don't think I'm sending that answer to President Falls, do you? It's his sacred son back there, and he's been giving me foul orders ever since we picked up his souze car at the junction. If the Jap only carries him my little speech, and the cub only reports it to his old man, I'm in line for promotion, if that's worth while."

A savage diatribe upon the road in general was presently interrupted by the arrival of Bessy Falls, attended by his quartet of friends.

"I demand an apology," he said, his dimples interlarding slyly with his severity. "You will either apologize or I shall be compelled to ask you to fight," declared young Mr. Falls very sternly.

"That's what I call sportin'," announced Rickey Saunders.

O'Connell looked over the shoulders and arms of the athletic young Mr. Falls appreciatively, and a twinkle came into his eye. "Far be it from me to commit assault, battery or mayhem upon the son of my bread and butter," he stated. "But even if you were your own father, Mr. Falls, I'll bet a month's pay I'd defend myself if struck—if struck!"

To the surprise of all, young Mr. Falls dashed his fist angrily into the red countenance of Conductor O'Connell. Then Mr. Falls hit the ground! Big Jim Wallingford bent over the prostrate Bessy.



Wallingford Bent Over the Prostrate Bessy.

wide cracks. What we must do is to make the hollow sections like this," and he deftly and ruttlessly cut open upon alternate edges one of Bessy's sections, telescoping the two parts upon each other slightly so as to show the plan of overlapping, and then reversing them to show how much space they saved in nesting for shipment.

"There was a general chorus of polite exclamations.

"That surely makes Mr. Wallingford one of the family Reggie," declared Rickey. "I vote him in, fellows. Now, one, two, three—"

"Aye!" courteously shouted his friends in perfect unison.

"I thank you," said Wallingford, rising and bowing gravely.

"I've only a minute, and then I must go back to my partners," announced the chuckling Wallingford as he stepped into the Pullman drawing room, where he explained the matter.

"Can Fannie and I help?" offered Violet eagerly. She and Blackie had become good friends.

J. Rufus blinked, and then he chuckled. "It will give Blackie and me great pleasure," he assured her. "Would you mind, Miss Fannie, if I gave you a little detective work in the office of the Speckled Bass Portable Bungalow company? Miss Violet, you'll have to help Blackie in three towns at once. Blackie, you are to be Mr. Bezazum of Bezunk, Mich.; Mr. Cazuzka of Cazak, Ont., and Mr. Penapopus of Penap, Ark."

The grand opening of the factory of the Speckled Bass Hollow Walled Portable Bungalow company was a function long to be remembered. Fully one-third of the factory was given over to offices befitting such a distinguished set of officers. Entering a spacious vestibule in Dutch tiling, one saw surrounding him a number of beautiful glass doors, leading into the office of President Haugh, in mahogany and ebony; of Second Vice President Humpedink in rosewood and silver birch; of Secretary Saunders in walnut and cedar; of Treasurer Cash, in redwood and birdseye maple, and of Manager Wallingford in plain oak.

Besides these there were a buffet, stocked with more varieties of liquids than a dye shop, and a small boy, prond in many gold buttons. Also there was a very neat and retiring private secretary for Manager Wallingford. Behind the offices was the factory, with workmen, grinning foolishly when unobserved, in snow white uniforms, and the very cleanest of clean shavings scattered everywhere. The board of directors held their first regular meeting in the new quarters.

"You see, fellows," declared Rickey Saunders, "it's not only sportin', but rippin', what this chap Wallingford's done. Oh, come in Mr. Wallingford. Join us in an abstein puff!"

"No, thanks, boys," smiled the general manager. "I came in to discuss stern business and to lay before you a synopsis of our progress during the two months and a half since we organized our company. I now have the pleasure of presenting the most promising of the replies I have had from our advertising. The first one of these, requesting us to make a price on 300 of the portable bungalows, is from a Michigan cranberry monopolist who expects to house his pickers right where the picking is good. The next one, from Ontario, wishes prices on a hundred and twenty-five, and this one, from Arkansas, asks for a quotation on a hundred of the portable bungalows."

"Heard! Heard!" shouted Rickey Saunders, and the others clapped their hands.

Wallingford laid down the letters and took up two other packages. "I have furthermore to report," he went on, "that we have received our joint patent from the government at Washington, granting us the exclusive right to manufacture our article in the United States."

He held up the document in question, exhibiting its gaudy ribbon and seal.

"Also I have to report," he continued, "this time with solemn impressiveness, 'the procuring of six patents in my own name for six more or less trivial improvements in portable houses or bungalows. These are, of course, my own invention and my own property, but it is only my decent duty to offer them to the Speckled Bass Portable Bungalow company at the nominal price of \$125,000, cash! Here are the copies, gentlemen, and I shall retire without recommendation of any sort.' And he retired.

"Seems to me this Wallingford chap's too good a business man for us. You see, it's like this," said Ringgold Cash.

"To begin with, the fellow has no right to invent portable house improvements after we have perfected the article."

"That's it! It isn't sportin'!" declared Rickey, much disappointed in Wallingford.

"Gentlemen of the board, I move you that we table Official Manager Wallingford's proposition," said Bessy.

"Rippin!" shouted Rickey. Jumping up. "Three cheers and a tiger for Bessy! Now, fellows, one, two, three!"

A gentleman from Bezunk, Mich., a

Mr. Bezazum, visited the factory quite opportunely one day while a special called directors' meeting was in session. With him was a beautiful daughter whom he called Violet and who in Wallingford's private office rushed into the arms of the private secretary and giggled for a solid five minutes.

Pete Bezazum of Bezunk was in truth a wondrous creature in felt boots, corduroy trousers, a canvas coat, a sweater of gorgeous hues and wondrous pattern and a broad brimmed felt hat. As for his countenance, it was lean and bony, with the most absurdly sprawled black mustache imaginable and a little tuft of chin whiskers which began neatly to be a goatee and ended in all directions as if it had suddenly become intoxicated.

His eyebrows were equally black, and beneath them glowed a pair of black eyes which alternately twinkled with mischief and flashed with hawklike intensity.

Toad Jessup, the gold buttoned small boy, after one good look at him, went out into the stock room, where he leaned over a barrel of nails and laughed with the stomach ache.

"Well, yuh see, gents," said Mr. Bezazum in objection to the company's product. "I'm a-willin' tuh pay thuh topnotch buh dangid price for thuh very best buh gosh part-table houses what can be coaxed together, and I gut thuh buh jig money,—and here he slapped his pocket meaningly,—'bu-ut I don't notice from your catalogue enough newfrangled doodads, dinguses and hickies tuh seem tuh chahm thuh dollars out'n these co'duroys.'"

"The members of the board looked around.

"I'm very sorry, Mr. Bezazum," returned Mr. Wallingford, "but I am sure that our catalogues do not do full justice to the Speckled Bass Portable Bungalow. You must come out into our factory and inspect one which is complete and ready for shipment. You have not seen the improvements upon the Speckled Bass bungalow."

Deftly and quickly the manager displayed the wonderful attachments protected by the six Wallingford patents.

"Yuh can jes' book mah ohdah faw 300 hollow walled bungalows with all of them thuh improvements, and I sllip yuh 10 per cent of thuh entire bill in cash right now. Yo' all can ship the balance C. O. D., and you can write or telegraph anybody in Bezunk, Mich., about the credit of ole Pete Bezazum."

On the day the shipments of Mr. Bezazum of Bezunk, Mr. Cazuzka of Cazak and Mr. Penapopus of Penap were to reach their destination Mr. Wallingford's private secretary called on a certain lawyer, who immediately telephoned a certain other lawyer. On that day the National Hollow Walled Portable House company, which was a real concern doing a real business, filed a suit against the Speckled Bass concern for infringement of patents and damages. An injunction was also filed.

Here was a pretty how do you do! Manager Wallingford immediately called a board of directors' meeting, an imperative one, and three most important social engagements were broken. This thing of being in trade had become a bore.

Four days after the suit was filed there came an agonized telegram from

"My dear Mr. Bezazum, you must realize that, so far as intent goes, we are entirely innocent in this affair. In a spirit of fairness, however, we will do this much. We will pay the freight both ways, take back the 300 portable houses and repay your 10 per cent advance deposit in cash."

"Hear, hear!" cried Rickey Saunders, in a tone which tried to be exhilarating. "That's a sportin' offer, Mr. Bezazum."

Mr. Bezazum's answer to that sporting offer was immediate, picturesque and violent. He intended to press his claim in the highest courts in the land, so help him Moses, and there was no possible compromise. Hold on, thought

There might—that is, it was just barely possible that there might—be a way out. It might be barely possible that if the Speckled Bass company were to relinquish the goods free, in settlement of Mr. Bezazum's claim—well, gentlemen, there you were!

The dense silence was broken by Humpedink. "Did I understand the gentleman to say that he offered a compromise?" he queried in tones of intense thought.

Mr. Wallingford, apparently hopeless and despairing, put the compromise into intelligible terms.

"At last there's somethin' fairly sportin'!" Rickey plucked up his spirits enough to announce. "Is it correct, guv'nor, that this gentleman will just take the 300 portable houses and go back home to Bezap, or Bezilber, or wherever it is, and never—er—never molest us again?"

"That is his only term," vociferated Mr. Bezazum.

"Then," went on Rickey, still brightening, "I vote, fellows, that we accept the bloomin' compromise and thank the gentleman from Bezam for having made his rippin' good sportin' offer."

"Just a moment, gentlemen," warned Wallingford solemnly. "We are setting a dangerous precedent. We have customers in Ontario and in Arkansas who will be claiming the very same terms."

"Move we let 'em all have the terms," returned Rickey promptly. "Move we let 'em all have 'em. That's sportin', eh, fellows? Somebody second the motion."

"They had barely made that resolution when the attorney for the National company just managed to happen in upon them. The attorney for the National company was very severe. He would give the Speckled Bass company a few minutes in which to buy for \$125,000 Wallingford's patents, which had been infringed, and to quit business entirely and forever.

It took the board of directors just forty-three seconds to accept the proposition, and immediately thereafter it departed in a body, declining even to take a parting drink in the hideous marts of trade.

Violet and Fannie Warden started nervously as the door of Manager Wallingford's private office opened, but they brightened as Mr. Wallingford and Pete Bezazum entered with a distinct and concerted swagger.

"Everybody's discharged," announced J. Rufus jovially. "The Speckled Bass company has gone out of business."

"Forever!" Mr. Bezazum pulled out his whiskers and threw them on the desk and became Blackie Daw. "We must have cleaned up about a quarter of a million for the Warden restitution fund, Jim."

"A little better, I think," Wallingford threw open the safe and drew out a bundle, which he tossed on the desk. "There's a hundred and twenty-five thousand cash, which I wouldn't touch until we had every possible comeback settled."

"That's the idea," Blackie turned in explanation to the mystified girls. "In any case deal it's easy enough to get hold of the money, but to make it safe money requires both skill and patience."

Violet laughed, but Fannie still looked troubled.

"I don't quite understand how you got this money, Mr. Wallingford."

"By strictly legitimate business methods in use every day from Portland, Me., to Portland, Ore.," immediately claimed Wallingford, quite anxious to convince Fannie that it was all right.

"That isn't what I meant," Fannie went on.

"However you got it, the money is for patents you sold the company—your inventions."

"Bunk!" grinned Blackie. "Jim invents like he eats his dinner, five or six courses at a time. The fact you have to consider is that we got this \$125,000 for the heirs of the Warden estate out of the heirs of some of the crooks who robbed it. And there's more besides, girls. You own 525 fine, hollow walled, very portable bungalows. What are they worth, Jim?"

"Can't say exactly," Wallingford had a deep frown on his brow. "They're at good distributing points, and they should bring a couple of hundred thousand dollars, but the National Portable Bungalow company offers us a hundred thousand net, and—"

"Put away the pencil and paper, Jim," ordered Blackie, for Wallingford had begun to figure. "We'll take that hundred thousand and know where we're at. How about it, girls?"

"But we can't accept all that money!" protested Fannie. The girls had clasped hands again. "No—"

"That'll do," said Wallingford gruffly. "You'll take what we get for you or we won't play."

"Let 'em pay your expenses, Jim," Blackie had detected a tear trembling on Violet's lashes, and Fannie's lips were quivering. "Expenses consist of whatever any of us blowed in. And I move that we lock up this office and throw the key away, hire an eighty horsepower car and go some place for a celebration dinner—the expense fund!"

"I'm ag'in you, see?"

Mr. Bezazum that an injunction had been served upon him, forbidding him to pay for and remove the portable bungalows consigned to him. On the second day after that, again, Mr. Bezazum himself came into the factory, both himself and his daughter, clad in the most violent silk sweaters procurable.

"Hey!" shrieked Mr. Bezazum, "O! I have the law on yez, begob! You promised me 300 bungalows, and O! her me min engaged and no houses to put them in. I could have got thim shanties elsewhere; but, by chemny, I place my confidence een dis skinner concern, and they turn me down. I'm ag'in yoo! Tomorow, by heck, I'll stack you up in front of a \$200,000 damage suit, so help me! And that goes!"

"I'm ag'in you, see?"

"I'm ag